

Appl. No. 10/708,456
Amendment dated Nov. 28, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated 09/28/2005

Remarks/Arguments

The claims currently presented in the application are 1, 4-7, and 11. Claims 2, 3, and 8-10 are previously canceled. Claim 1 is amended. Claim 11 is new.

The courtesy of a telephone conference on Nov. 22, 2005, with Examiner Lugo is gratefully acknowledged. Discussion of Claim 1 focused upon how it might best be stated in the claim that the stop interacts with a member of the keeper. This interaction of the stop with the keeper distinguishes from the prior art, especially from Willcox.

Claim 1 is amended at line 12, that the keeper "comprises" a cross-latch. This change makes clear that the cross-latch is a component of the keeper.

Next, the latch bar and keeper end stop are related, as follows:

the latch bar comprises a keeper end stop, and said cross-latch is suitably positioned with respect to the reception passage to be engaged with said keeper end stop for stopping entry of said latch bar within the reception passage at a location where the cavity is positioned to receive the cross-latch when the cross-latch is in said position of lesser intersection with the reception passage;

As discussed and mentioned in the final Office Action, these amendments establish a complimentary element in the keeper for interacting with the keeper end stop of the latch bar. These portions of the amendment directly address the examiner's requirement that the claim should clearly establish that the stop interacts with a keeper element.

Further amendments to Claim 1, lines 35-37, better conform the remainder of this claim to the changes just discussed.

Claim 7 previously was identified as containing allowable subject matter, if rewritten in independent form, including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In conformity with this requirement, the subject matter of claim 7 is presented in independent form as new Claim 11. The elements of original claims 1, 4, 6 and 7 are combined as new Claim 11. The resulting subject matter of Claim 11 differs in scope from Claim 7 because it is based upon the non-amended content of Claim 1 and the intervening claims. The resulting number and type of claims are within those paid for in the original filing fee.

Considering that allowable subject matter has been identified, if there remains any hindrance to full allowance, a telephone call would be greatly

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appreciated so that the issue can be resolved, perhaps by examiner's amendment, within the remaining time without requiring extension under this final rejection. Thank you for your consideration.

Applicant claims the benefit of filing this amendment within two month of mailing date for the final office action.

The claims are believed to be in better consideration for allowance or appeal. Applicant requests the early issuance of a notice of allowability.

Respectfully submitted,



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